GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3018
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2002
DIRECTION FOR SCREENING OF DOCUMENTARIES FILMS
SUBODH MOHITE

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the film exhibitors are not screening the documentaries produced by the media unit despite Supreme Court`s direction for compulsory screening of documentaries;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Prasar Bharati proposes to start a new channel for documentaries and films;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the steps proposed for screening of these documentaries?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SMT. SUSHMA SWARAJ)

(a)&(b): As per the verdict of the Hon`ble Supreme Court, cinema exhibitors are bound to screen approved films in their cinema houses by obtaining the same either from Films Division or from any other source. Most of the cinema exhibitors in the country are screening the documentary films supplied by the Films Division. However, 62 cinema exhibitors who are members of Eastern India Motion Picture Association, Kolkata and another 110 cinema exhibitors in Uttar Pradesh are not exhibiting the documentaries of Films Division. While cinema exhibitors in UP are reportedly showing films supplied by a private agency, 62 cinema exhibitors in West Bengal are not screening the documentary films of Films Division on the plea that these are not approved by the Film Advisory Board, Government of West Bengal. They have filed Writ Petitions before the High Court, Kolkata. The matter is sub-judice.

(c),(d) & (e):There is no proposal at present, to start a new channel for telecast of documentary films. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between Doordarshan and Films Division for telecast of documentaries produced by FilmsDivision on various channels of Doordarshan on sponsorship basis. Accordingly, 13 Doordarshan Kendras are telecasting documentaries produced by Films Division on a weekly basis.